

EASY TO BE NOBLE IN FRANCE

BIGUS TITLES AND REAL ONES LIVE SIDE BY SIDE.

Philadelphians Who Have Rehabilitated an Ancient Family—The D'Aulby Case The "Armorial" of d'Hozier Being Remaking a Chateau.

PARIS, Jan. 1.—The widow of Hamilton Paine, finding herself cheated in old times, old wines and old furniture, brought suit against the bogus D'Aulby and married an authentic noble of historic title to preserve her from like errors in the future. Her chief surprise, therefore, in all this publicity is a new doubt thrust on her: has she or Miss Countess of New York become the Duchesse de Choiseul?

Mrs. Hamilton Paine thought that she

in the Hamilton Paines of Boston played upon this idealism and was himself an idealist. So was his innocent American wife. When she learned her babe was not a Count she fainted.

So were their purely French neighbors of Tours.

Eight years ago the quiet and correct Daulby couple, self-changed to D'Aulby, bought a half ruined chateau outside Tours for \$6,000, and although they never paid but \$1,000 of it they made \$10,000 worth of restorations. This, with their unextravagant but kindly hospitality, won the newcomers all the recognition they wanted from the local gentry and made them favorites with the officers of the Tours garrison. The idle officers played tennis with the refined American chateau and her frequent American guests. How could they imagine that they were acting as stool pigeons to guarantee bogus nobility on the spot? The case is so typical of how crooked



"TO BE TITLED, TO BE NOBLE, TO LOOK BACK ON A LONG LINE OF GENTLE ANCESTORS, SNUG FOR CENTURIES IN MANOR OR CHATEAU, WITH LEGENDS AND TRADITIONS."

and taken the title from a property purchased in Brittany.

The girl wanted to let her unworthy suitor go, but listened to her lawyer's promise of retaliation. At the next hearing they created a sensation in their turn. They proved that the Baronet himself had no right to a title. His grandfather had simply appropriated that which "Baron" de C— honestly believed to have descended from aristocratic ancestors.

And finally with the decision of the Judges came the third surprise for average Frenchmen. Both the Comte de R— and the Baron's grandfather had a right to adorn themselves with titles. Any Frenchman may be baron, comte, vicomte, duke or marquis on condition of not taking the title of a family still existing.

The practice dates from the days back in 1830 when Louis Philippe, coming in on the wave of a "democratic revolution" against the encroachments of the higher privileged aristocrats, decreed not the extinction of aristocratic titles but their free use by any one who cared to assume them. Had not this law of the Citizen King let down the bars there would not now be 20,000 families in all France enjoying the undoubted right to titles.

The great Napoleon had created numbers of princes, dukes, counts, barons, but he did not let them usurp old family names; and to show that his basis was personal merit he connected titles with civil and military grades: a colonel was a baron, a senator a count, &c. By their nature all these titles, except those with entailed estates attached to them, should have become extinct on the death of their holders.

will understand the scope of a completed Hozier's "Armorial."

The Hozier family of judges of arms to the Kings of France occupied itself for centuries in collecting manuscripts and publishing what was to be a complete directory of French nobility.

One hundred and fifty manuscript volumes of the first Pierre d'Hozier are in the National Library. Another d'Hozier was employed by Louis XVIII. to draw up exhaustive lists of what remained of the old nobility after the revolution and Napoleonic era. The erudite work was never finished, and the d'Hoziers are no more.

Masses of d'Hozier manuscripts, however, seem to have fallen into the hands of an enterprising heraldic institute provided over by the learned Alexander Daigne and exercising the right to put "Armorial d'Hozier" in big letters at the heading of its prospectuses.

According to this literature there remain over 30,000 French families whose proofs of nobility exist unknown to them; they have never yet been published. The Armorial was unfortunately stopped at its twenty-fourth volume; but it will be finished, and noble subscribers can find their genealogies in it at the following tariff:

Volume with genealogy, \$6; genealogy a page, \$2; verifications of nobility, \$25; proofs going back less than 100 years, \$30; less than 200 years, \$65.

How with outside skilled help it is child's play to send the publishers your connection with an ancient family was shown by quite another professional genealogist.

"You have two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents and

the château, all exciting novelty. No American can resist the magic of reviving the old place with its associations. One of Anna Gould-Sagan's standing grievances against Count Boni de Castellane was that with all her millions he had never even begun the restoration of the primitive Castellane eagle's nest.

I went through Castellane last summer in an auto. Few have been there twenty miles from any railroad. And to see it was to understand Anna's contempt for Count Boni.

The town still lives on Castellane works

fluently. Nor do home Americans mix with Paris Americans, become foreign. If you fill the house with these latter they will run it for you, cultivating the local French for their own purposes.

It is possible to keep open house for the local nobility. They are really nice. But you will have a foreign atmosphere. The most successful have their guests in sympathetic batches.

It is the practice of two remarkable Chicago sisters, who twice a year fill up with home cousins and their wives and children their old feudal stronghold on

Repeatedly Americans snuggle up to old nobility so successfully that they almost fall in.

They call it modestly "restoring a chateau," and nothing is more charming. You buy a ruin and start with archaeological architects and consulting antiquaries. They can show you how the old place was in every century. These your century. I know a family from Oregon, of which the poetic epistolary-year-old daughter found an ancient stained glass window representing Abilard and Heloise and built it in their chateau as a family portrait.

In spite of the destruction of documents in the Revolution quantities have come to life again. You can almost learn the ancient details of each room. The monumental chimney-piece of your dining hall is now unfortunately in the Roche family's house at Paris, but the experts know of another in a Spanish chateau. Shall they buy it? The consultations throw you into contact with what remains of the local nobility; some old, some new like yourself.

It is back and forth between Paris and

dinners, the gratuitous use of your automobile and dances for the young folk. At the head of your table in the banquet hall, hung with all those tapestries you bought, you look down on a scene beautiful with flowers, four and sixteen mingling toilets. Wax candles throw dancing lights on the wine-soaked tapestries to be genuine. It is no moment, for the electricity. You are reviving the local nobility.

Later the trial begins. You may at times be just a trifle lonely. The local nobles live scattered fifty miles around. Travel for two annual dinners and departures you are sure to see them if you send the automobile for them. You are to the acquisition, but they cannot waste money on you.

The American girl who marries a title has at least his family to keep the chateau going. If they take possession they also make haste and interest. But when an American family buy a place they have to fill it.

It is not easy to mix equal quantities of home Americans and local French. They do not speak each other's language



"YOU DO WRONG TO SMILE AT THE NOBILITY," SAID THE GENEALOGICAL EXPERT. "IT IS ETERNAL, BEING FOUNDED ON THE ROCK OF HUMAN VANITY."

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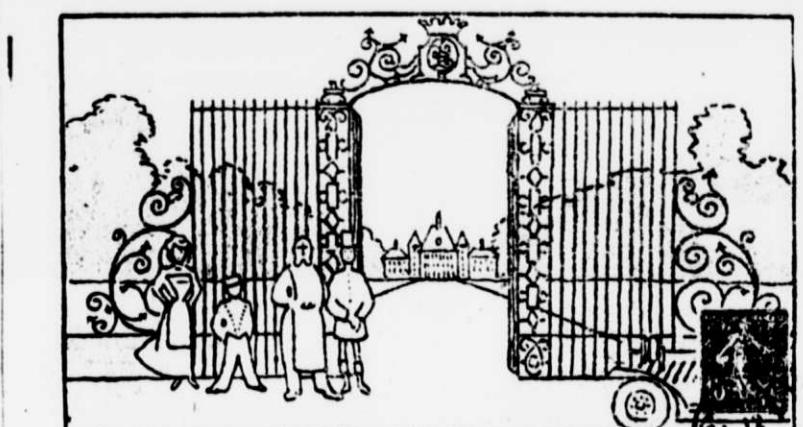
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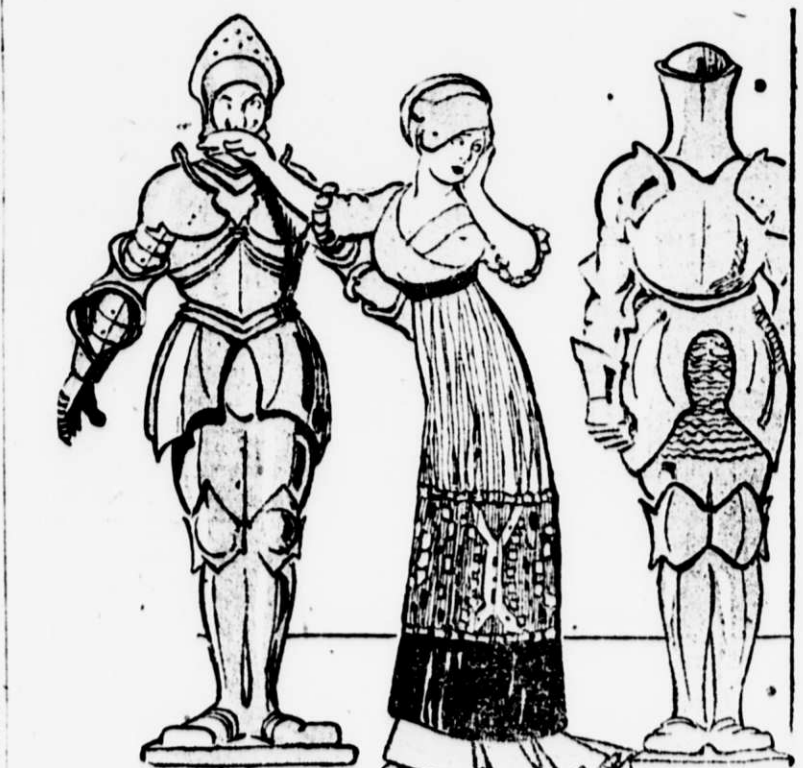
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"FOR SALE—APPLY OPPOSITE," MEANS ACROSS THE ATLANTIC"

ship after 700 years of neglect. In the square there is a monument inscribed to various Counts Boniface, from 665 to 1217—and there the grateful people stick. High on an apocryphic butte are "the two walls at right angles," as Count Boni calls them. How could they be restored? But an old parish priest who has written a history of Castellane says that the angels themselves would have aided that job because the Counts Boniface saved

the Gironde, three miles from Libourne. For 300 years it had been uninhabited, its name being only known from the Bordeaux wine, never exported, grown on its slopes. Purchasing the dismantled ancient war nest for a small sum, the sisters had to oblige themselves to permit the wingrowing to continue all around them. They pretend that they really enjoy it, from the life and local color it affords them.



"SMILE AS YOU WILL THE BEST AMERICAN YIELDS TO THE ARMOR IDEAL IN ONE OF THESE ROMANTIC NESTS."

Christian civilization from the Moslems, whom they checked until Charles Martel got ready. The queer thing is that it really seems true, and possibly Count Boni thinks that the family has done enough.

The first month's residence in the chateau is pure delight. Steam heating, sanitation, baths make a quaint contrast with the old place. The neighboring chateau people treat you as an acquisition. Many are hard up, thankful for good

It is really a fortress of the Middle Ages, Paris still in magnificent parts. Architects and furnishers have maintained such admirable simplicity that the effect seems almost theatrical.

On summer nights the guests are led around the battlements. Moonlight falls on the silvery bosom of the Gironde, and you dream of when the Black Prince took those walls.

Here is where De Tremblay received the poisoned letter from Louis XI. Here is a door cunningly hidden in the wall-sealing. It leads by a long secret passage to the ruined chapel. Through it the henchmen of Marianne de Saint-Victor recovered the stronghold, while her husband lay false Ananias's captive. If the Chicago girls could find some real use for that secret passage I think that they would assume the title.

An Arizona Platform. Duluth correspondence Plumber Peck. Charles Purdon of Douglas, Ariz., in the city and he expects to succeed Ralph Cameron as congressman from that State when Cameron runs for Governor. Purdon has a unique platform and it is brief but comprehensive. It is: Five rooms, a bath and a piano for everybody. Purdon used to live in Duluth and has been in Arizona eight years.



"COUNT LOUIS'S PORTRAIT HUNG BESIDE THAT OF COUNT ROBERT, LIEUTENANT IN THE REGENT'S BLUE MUSKETEERS. THESE ARE NEAR-ANCESTORS."

had married the head of the historic house of Choiseul this on the strength of the "Almanach de Gotha." Now the Marquis de Choiseul-Beaupre, who married Miss Cordet, says that he is Duc de Choiseul and Mrs. Paine's husband only Duc de Praslin.

France, with the mixup of its Revolution, is the great field for swifter nobility.

Some of the Americans, at least, are idealists. They have established a con-

titles can be set up that its swindling features are mere details. Unlike most self-enoblers, "Count" d'Aulby needed money and sold counterfeit old masters to confiding parvenus, but he had himself been swindled in Italy, honestly trying to buy up a bona fide title. It was the domain of Borghetto near Naples, but he did not let them usurp old family names; and to show that his basis was personal merit he connected titles with civil and military grades: a colonel was a baron, a senator a count, &c. By their nature all these titles, except those with entailed estates attached to them, should have become extinct on the death of their holders.



"THEN PURCHASERS OF OLD CHATEAUX ADOPTED THEIR NAMES WITHOUT CEREMONY."

nection with the old régime, not to deceive the world but to gratify themselves. For years past a branch of a Philadelphia family claiming noble French descent has been re-created in a once ruined, now magnificent, chateau not far from romantic Cahors. In particular their gallery of ancestral portraits is admired; because at first glance it would seem impossible to reconstruct in a ruined castle a gallery of problematical forebears totally destroyed in a bloody revolution.

The Philadelphians have done the impossible. They have studied their French ancestors who lived in this chateau. They know that Count Louis's portrait hung beside that of the first Marquis.

Disgusted he tranquilly and cheaply assumed a title in France.

Side by side with the old French families there has grown up an immense mass of bogus French nobility. What the situation is already under the republic with Hozier's "Armorial" not completed—may be judged from a recent lawsuit.

Fifteen years ago a man came to Versailles from no one knows where, but as he purchased a fine property, responded to courtesies and lived in dignity the landed proprietors came to accept him as the Comte de R— of Brittany, a widower with a little daughter come south for his health.

Years passed. The girl grew up in the society around her and was about



"HE WAS AN IDEALIST, SO WAS HIS INNOCENT AMERICAN WIFE. WHEN SHE LEARNED HER BABE WAS NOT A COUNT SHE FAINTED."

that Count Robert, lieutenant of the Regent's Blue Musketeers, hung beside Count Jean, who lost one leg as Admiral of the Toulon galleys. Proudly buying up old portraits, as near as possible to the descriptions, their American descendants have reconstructed the gallery. Another noble American in France proves his ancestry by standing for you with his profile against the portrait of the "be-headed Marquis"—painted, of course, before the beheading. You've got to watch the provincial dealers for such finds.

These are near-ancestors. It is understood that armor cannot be all real in these days. But it can be part real and part reconstructed—like the chateau.

to marry the young Baron de C— when her father suddenly died a bankrupt.

Of course Baron de C— refused to marry her. On the other hand, as he had his honor to keep bright he did a lot of thinking, so finally when he went into court to have the marriage contract set decently aside his plea astonished every one. His lawyer proved that the girl's father was not of a noble family, had amassed his fortune as a Rouen manufacturer

On the other hand much of the ancient nobility had been wiped out by bloody revolution, poverty and exile. Of the gigantic sum of \$200,000,000 set apart by the restoration to aid it in purchasing back its estates, the greater part was going by favoritism to a few powerful families. The "petite noblesse" was being left quite unsatisfied, when Louis Philippe

Napoleon III. dared not strike immediately at so important a faction as this self-made nobility; yet he tried to introduce a little order into the registers.

where obliging officials had recorded all sorts of fanciful names and "des" possessed only in imagination.

He even issued a circular, and a scandal arising therefrom affecting 50,000 un-



"RECONSTRUCTED IN A RUINED CASTLE A GALLERY OF NON-EXISTENT ANCESTORS TOTALLY DESTROYED IN A REVOLUTION."



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"BOUGHT A HALF RUINED CHATEAU OUTSIDE TOURS FOR \$6,000, AND ALTHOUGH THEY NEVER PAID BUT \$1,000 OF THE PRICE THEY MADE \$10,000 WORTH OF RESTORATIONS."

authorized titles came near overthrowing the empire. Add to these all the titles granted by Napoleon III. and all those tranquilly assumed since his day and you

so on," he said. "Except for intermarriages, it is a geometrical progression, so that at the end of a few centuries you are directly descended from hundreds and thousands of persons. Would it not be strange if among them all you could not find authentic titles? Noble families have kept tab on themselves and commoners have not—that's all."



"OF COURSE BARON C— REFUSED TO MARRY A GIRL WHO HAD LOST HER MONEY, BUT AS HE HAD HIS HONOR TO KEEP BRIGHT HE DID A LOT OF THINKING."

"But suppose I don't know my ancestors beyond my grandfather?" I suggested.

"All the easier," he answered. "I just carry your family back to a certain propitious date, and slip you into one of those extinct aristocratic families. I can draw up a heraldic tree for any one."

The present republic has for five years back studied as a budget expedient a plan to tax titles \$1,000 for a duke, \$400 for a marquis, \$300 for a count, \$200 for a vicomte. And as the republic disclaims any ability to decide between true and false the Ministerial tax receipt would certify them equally.



"THE AMERICAN GIRL WHO MARRIES A TITLE HAS HER HUSBAND'S FAMILY TO KEEP THE CHATEAU GOING. BUT WHEN AN AMERICAN FAMILY JUST BUY A PLACE THEY HAVE TO FILL IT."

The English swindler who recently took